I CLAIM:

1. A clamp comprising:

a support comprising a first end and a second end and defining a support axis;

a workpiece supporting element mounted to the support;

a clamp body releasably connected to the support through a channel formed in the clamp body wherein the first end is inserted into the channel, the clamp body comprising:

a retainer movably mounted to the clamp body to engage the support selectively and thereby to hold the clamp body selectively against movement with respect to the support in at least a first direction along the support axis;

a jaw mounted on the clamp body and opposing the workpiece supporting element; and

an end cap opposite the jaw on the clamp body wherein the clamp body is restrained from motion along the support axis towards the workpiece supporting element beyond the first end of the support.

2. The clamp in claim 1 wherein the retainer comprises a tab positioned around the support, coupled to the clamp body, and movable between an inclined position, in which the retainer holds the clamp body against movement in at least the first direction with respect to the support, and a release position, in which the retainer accommodates movement of the clamp body in the first direction with respect to the support.

3. The clamp in claim 1 wherein the retainer is coupled to the clamp body by a spring mechanism which is partially compressed when the retainer is the inclined position, and fully compressed when the retainer is in the release position.

4. A method for orienting a clamp body with respect to a support of a clamp comprising:

providing a support with a clamp body secured to a support;

placing a retainer in the clamp body in a release position by depressing the retainer;

wherein at the release position the clamp body is moved in a first direction along the support but is prevented from moving in a direction opposite the first direction; and

removing the clamp body from the support.

5. The method in claim 4, further comprising:

placing the retainer in the clamp body in the release position by depressing the retainer;

placing a channel of the clamp body and a first end of the support in substantial alignment;

inserting the clamp body onto the support until the first end impinges on an end cap of the clamp body; and

placing the retainer in an inclined position by releasing the retainer so that the clamp body is attached to the support.

6. A method for orienting a clamp body with respect to a support of a clamp comprising:

providing a clamp body and support unattached to one another;

placing a retainer in the clamp body in a release position by depressing the retainer;

placing a channel of the clamp body and a first end of the support in substantial alignment;

inserting the clamp body onto the support until the first end impinges on an end cap of the clamp body; and

placing the retainer in an inclined position by releasing the retainer so that the clamp body is attached to the support.

7. A clamp body for attachment to a support comprising:
a channel formed in the clamp body;
a retainer movably mounted to the clamp body;
a jaw mounted on the clamp body; and
an end cap blocking one end of the channel.

8. The clamp body in claim 7 wherein the retainer comprises a tab coupled to the clamp body, and movable between an inclined position and a release position.

9. The clamp body in claim 7 wherein the retainer is coupled to the clamp body by a spring mechanism which is partially compressed when the retainer is the inclined position, and fully compressed when the retainer is in the release position.